/118 cont./

221 objective of requesting the demons and saints to send them pros-
796 perity along with the rain. The beginning of the year 1931 was
132 marked by a long period of dryness (1) and I witnessed the anguish
[152]

1. During the months of January and February I made a certain number of meteorological observations which were unfortunately incomplete because of my frequent moves. For January the average maximum temperature was 19° to 20° /centigrade/ and that of the minimum temperature 6°. In February we had an average maximum temperature of 19° and a minimum temperature of 5°. In January I noted a high of 24° and a low of 1°. For February the high was 23° and the low −1°. February was rainier than January although the end of the latter month was marked by some violent storms and hail.

of the Čipaya; this anxiety manifested itself perhaps in the pomp and seriousness with which they carried out the festivals which I shall describe later.

The winter is a testing time for the Čipaya. They spoke to me in eloquent language of its rigors—dried and yellowed pastures, thin and starving animals, icy winds which pierced to the /119/
[182] bone. This entire season passes without festivals, at least without pagan festivals, and this cessation of religious life is good evidence of the close correlation that exists between the pagan ceremonies of the Čipaya and their problems of subsistence.

/119 cont./

133 182 No one yet knows to what extent environment can influence the religious conceptions of a human group, but if environment does indeed exercise the action on imagination which formerly was credited to it there can be no doubt that Cipaya mythology would have to abound in harsh and cruel elements. Life in the [152] Carangas deserts is hard. The Indians are the first to acknowledge this, and they speak of their territory only with a dull bitterness: "these bare plains where we live," such is the expression which 133 most frequently recurs. Few regions have given me such an impression of emptiness as Chipaya. The mountains on the horizon rise on the plains as if emerging from the sea. The color of this territory is a uniform green verging on the grey cut by the dunes in a pale stroke.

This landscape would be most desperately monotonous without the escape afforded by the Kimsa chata, the three snowy summits which are glimpsed to the north. The Sajama, one of the most beautiful peaks of the Andes and which the Cipaya worship, is not visible from the village itself, Cerro Camacha hiding it from sight.

136 The small artificial lakes of Chipaya attract a considerable number of water birds of different species. The flamingos (parina) (Phoenicopterus andinus, Phil.) whose insipid meat is rightly disdained by the Indians and which abound in Chipaya bring the only lively note into the monotony of the landscape. Nothing is more impressive than a flock of these marvelous birds outlining themselves in red against the brilliant blue of the puna sky. The 237 Indians use their feathers to decorate their hats at the time of the 825 great festivals. The eggs of these flamingos must be associated [182] with symbols of a religious or magical type for the Indians never fail to place one or two at the foot of the sacred sheaves which are one of the principal accessories of their pagan worships. I [301] have even seen individuals who put on curious diadems made of flamingo eggs threaded together.